

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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FOR DELIVERY TO USDEL TO INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
MEETING, LORD ELGIN HOTEL

FOL REPEAT OF SAN JOSE 1516 TO SECSTATE INFO GUATEMALA
APR 15

QTE:

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 1516

GUATEMALA FOR ROCAP

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OAS, IICA, CS

SUBJ: MAY IICA TECHNICAL BOARD MEETING IN OTTAWA

1. ING. MANUEL ELGUETA, DIRECTOR OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER (CATIE) AT TURRIALBA CALLED
ON AMBASSADOR ON APRIL 13 TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER INFORMATION
HE HAS RECEIVED AND DOCUMENTS HE HAS SEEN REGARDING
DISCUSSIONS BY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF IICA WITH THE UNIVERSITY
OF COSTA RICA AIMED AT TERMINATING 1970 AGREEMENT BETWEEN
IICA AND UNIVERSITY TO SUPPORT CATIE FOR A 10-YEAR PERIOD.
THESE TALKS APPEAR AIMED AT MORE RAPID DISSOLUTION OF CATIE
(AS EARLY AS JUNE 1976) AND CREATION OF A TROPICAL AGRI-
CULTURAL UNIVERSITY AND A REGIONAL CENTER OF UNIVERSITY
OF COSTA RICA AT TURRIALBA CENTER. ELGUETA STRESSED THAT
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CATIE CANNOT PLAN FOR FUTURE WITH AN UNCERTAIN TENURE NOR CAN

IT SOLICIT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES. ELGUETA THINKS THIS ISSUE MAY NOT BE BROUGHT UP AT MAY IICA TECHNICAL BOARD MEETING IN OTTAWA BECAUSE DIRECTOR GENERAL PROBABLY WILL NOT BE FULLY PREPARED BY THAT TIME. DIRECTOR GENERAL RECENTLY LEFT ON EXTENDED TRIP AND WILL RETURN ONLY DAYS PRIOR TO MAY MEETING. ELGUETA ASKED IF AMBASSADOR COULD REQUEST THAT U.S. DELEGATION SEEK TO PUT ISSUE ON AGENDA FOR MAY MEETING SO THAT THE QUESTION OF CATIE'S TENURE CAN BE SETTLED NOW. IF ISSUE NOT DISCUSSED THIS YEAR, CATIE FEELS THAT ITS FUTURE WILL BE IN LIMBO FOR ANOTHER YEAR UNTIL NEXT ANNUAL MEETING.

2. AMBASSADOR WAS SURPRISED BY THIS REVELATION HAVING VISITED WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL OF IICA TWO WEEKS EARLIER AND HAVING VISITED CENTER AT TURRIALBA SAME WEEK. ON THOSE OCCASIONS, HE GATHERED THAT IICA WAS SATISFIED WITH THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH CATIE ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT WORRIED ABOUT CATIE'S ABILITY TO OBTAIN FUNDS IN FUTURE WITH IICA'S CONTRIBUTION SCHEDULED TO GRADUALLY DIMINISH OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS AND THEN LEVEL OFF. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE TENURE OF THE CENTER WAS OF INTEREST TO USG BECAUSE OF PAST AND PROJECTED AID AND OTHER USG CONTRIBUTIONS TO CATIE.

3. MEMBERS OF AID MISSION HAVE ALSO PICKED UP REPORT OF POSSIBLE DISSOLUTION OF CATIE AND CREATION OF A REGIONAL UNIVERSITY AT TURRIALBA.

4. EMBASSY FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT QUESTION OF MORE RAPID THAN PREVIOUSLY PROGRAMMED REDUCTION IN IICA SUPPORT FOR CATIE AND FUTURE OF CATIE SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN OTTAWA NEXT MONTH AND THAT ELGUETA SHOULD BE INVITED TO PRESENT CATIE'S POSITION. ON RECENT VISIT TO TURRIALBA, AMBASSADOR AND OTHER MEMBERS OF MISSION GAINED IMPRESSION THAT RESEARCH EFFORTS AT TURRIALBA ARE BECOMING MORE PRACTICAL PROBLEM ORIENTED AND THAT RESULTS (I.E. MULTIPLE CROPPING) COULD HAVE FAR REACHING IMPACT ON CENTRAL AMERICAN NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE TO RURAL POOR. EMBASSY NOT PREPARED TO ENDORSE EITHER CATIE'S POSITION OR IICA'S POSITION AT THIS TIME, BUT BELIEVES THAT IT IS IN USG INTEREST TO SEE ISSUE AIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TODMAN UNQTE KISSINGER
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